Transforming New Jersey's Secondary Schools (Grades 6-12): <u>Essential Elements</u>

Vision: New Jersey will educate all students to prepare them to lead productive, fulfilling lives. Through a public education system that is seamlessly aligned from pre-school through college, students will gain the requisite academic knowledge and technical and critical thinking skills for life and work in the 21st century. (NJ STEPS Redesigning Education in New Jersey for the 21st Century: A Policy Report of the New Jersey High School Redesign Steering Committee)

Policy

- Policy supports college and career readiness for all students
- New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards include rigorous content, integration of 21st century knowledge and skills, and global perspectives
- Graduation requirements are aligned to credit-bearing college courses that lead to the completion of a degree and to workplace training that offers the opportunity for career advancement
- Revised assessment system is aligned with college and career readiness
- State and local accountability policies reflect Essential Elements
 - Policy development is informed by relevant data

Leadership

- State P-16 council works with stakeholders and policy making bodies to support the transformation of secondary schools
- School partnerships are formed with business and higher education
- Principal uses influence to build school's capacity to create and sustain an effective school vision, culture and instructional program
- District Boards of Education understand reasons and processes of change
- District administration supports school leadership
- Teacher leadership emerges
- Student voice is heard
- Collective and collaborative responsibility exists among staff and community
- Data is used to improve school climate, organization, curricula, and instruction

Student-Centered Learning Environment:

Focusing on the personal and intellectual development of students

Honoring individual differences and committing to high expectations for all

Supporting innovative thinking, reflection, exploration, and continuous professional learning

Creating a pervasive culture of respect and mutual help

Building a mutually influential relationship among the school, its families, and its community

Learning and Teaching

- Teaching and learning New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards is relevant to student lives and interests in the 21st century
- Teachers use a variety of innovative strategies to teach rigorous content and skills and to promote more active involvement of students in their own learning
- Integration of technology in all content areas includes virtual and face-to-face opportunities
- Every child learns; students experiencing difficulty benefit from support services in the school
- * Students are actively engaged in learning both in and out of the classroom
- Programs for student and staff learning are collaborative, coordinated, focused on clear learning goals, and sustained over a period of time

Personalization

- Meaningful adultstudent relationships (e.g., advisories, academies, learning communities)
- Safe and welcoming environment with the support of families and other adult mentors
- Career, academic and activities enrichment plans for each student (6 year individual student portfolio)
- Extended learning opportunities before, during and after school such as independent study, private instruction, performing groups, internships, community service, dual enrollment, apprenticeships, and online courses